



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
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FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-9003

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
300 E. 8TH STREET, ROOM 826  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701

July 15, 2011

Refer to: HPP-TX

Joint Approval of the May 2011 Quarterly Revisions to the  
FY 2011-2014 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Mr. James Randall, P. E.  
Director, Transportation Planning and Programming Division  
Texas Department of Transportation  
125 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Randall:

We have reviewed the May 2011 Quarterly Revisions to the FY 2011-2014 STIP transmitted by Mr. Amadeo Saenz's cover letter of June 7, 2011. Based upon our review, the May 2011 Quarterly Revisions to the STIP are hereby approved subject to the enclosed comments.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact either Mr. Kirk Fauver of the FHWA Texas Division at (512) 536-5952 or Ms. Lynn Hayes of FTA Region 6 office at (817) 978-0565 for additional information.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Patrick  
Regional Administrator, Region 6  
Federal Transit Administration

Michael T. Leary, Director  
Planning and Program Development  
Federal Highway Administration

Enclosure

cc: FHWA-HA-TX, HB-TX, HAM-TX  
Peggy Crist, FTA, Region VI  
Wayne Wells, TxDOT Design  
Angela Gill, TxDOT Design  
Lori Morel, TxDOT TPP(S)

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Kelly Kirkland, TxDOT PTN  
Robert Granberg, FHWA-TX

## Specific MPO/District Comments on the May 2011 Quarterly Revisions

### El Paso MPO:

1. Montana Corridor BRT (CSJ 0374-02-089): MPO cover letter states that this project is deprogrammed and removed from the TIP. Page 1 of the project listings shows the project as “reprogrammed” with no further explanation of changes. Approval of this revision is withheld pending clarification of status in STIP listing.
2. Highway Grade Separation US 62/180 (CSJ 0374-02-091): As this project is being deleted from the STIP, project costs included in the project listing should be zero. Additionally, has the associated project cost been removed from corresponding funding summary? This revision is approved contingent upon clarification of the noted funding issues.
3. Mesa (SH 20) BRT (CSJ 0001-02-054): Please clarify why the project costs have decreased so much from the previous STIP and the MTP (\$11,241,851 vs. \$23,000,000). This revision is approved contingent upon the clarification of the noted change in funding.
4. Dyer Corridor BRT (CSJ 0167-02-902): Please clarify why the project costs have decreased so much from the previous STIP and MTP (\$12,417,178 vs. \$44,669,411). This revision is approved contingent upon the clarification of the noted change in funding.

### Houston District/MPO:

1. General Comment: It is noted that several of the revisions proposed add the preliminary engineering (PE) or right-of-way acquisition (ROW) phases of work for various projects. However, the noted project revisions do not appear to reflect the total cost of the project reflected in the 2035 RTP Update or FY 2011-2014 STIP (i.e., total project cost noted appears to reflect only the total cost associated with PE or ROW phases of work being added and do not reflect the associated construction costs). Future STIP revisions should reflect the overall total project cost not just the total cost associated with the phase of work addressed in the revision.
2. Funding Summary: It is noted that H-GAC’s funding summary indicates two rows of information concerning “Pass Through Finance (PTF).” Additionally, a portion of this funding is also noted as “12-TMF” (\$308,472,933) in the table titled “Funding Participation Source.” What is the distinction between the two PTF categories?

3. CSJ 2744-01-011: This revision is approved. However, it is noted that the project appears to provide for widening (added capacity) of FM 2854 to 4-lanes (divided). This improvement does not appear to be included in the currently conforming 2035 RTP Update. Although state funding may be utilized to initiate Preliminary Engineering activities, Federal action (e.g., NEPA decision or authorization of federal funding) associated with this project may not be provided, until the proposed project is consistent with the conforming 2035 RTP Update.
4. CSJ 0110-04-188 and 0110-05-119: These revisions are approved. However, it is noted that these projects appear to provide for the creation of 2-managed lanes (added capacity) along IH 45. These improvements do not appear to be included in the currently conforming 2035 RTP Update. Although state funding may be utilized to initiate Preliminary Engineering activities, Federal action (e.g., NEPA decision or authorization of federal funding) associated with these projects may not be provided, until the proposed projects are consistent with the conforming 2035 RTP Update.
5. CSJ 0500-03-571: This revision is approved. However, it is noted that the project appears to provide for widening (added capacity) of IH-45 to 4-lanes. This improvement does not appear to be included in the currently conforming 2035 RTP Update. Although state funding may be utilized to initiate Preliminary Engineering activities, Federal action (e.g., NEPA decision or authorization of federal funding) associated with this project may not be provided, until the proposed project is consistent with the conforming 2035 RTP Update.
6. CSJ 0271-14-217: Approval of this revision is withheld. It is our understanding that this project was previously authorized.
7. MPO ID 10537: It is noted that the Year of Expenditure cost noted on the revised STIP page is different from that noted in the corresponding MPO TIP amendment documentation (i.e., \$7.5 million versus \$5.1 million). This revision is approved contingent upon clarification of the noted funding discrepancy.
8. CSJs 3510-05-002, 3510-05-023, 3510-05-024, 3510-05-025, 3510-05-026, and 3510-05-027: The description of work provided for these projects does not indicate the number lanes to be constructed. These revisions are approved contingent upon clarification of the project scope (e.g., number of lanes, etc.).
9. CSJ 0050-09-082: The project limits noted on the STIP page do not appear consistent with the project limits associated with the project referenced in the MPO TIP amendment document for the construction phase of the project (MPO ID 11574 in H-GAC 2035 RTP Update). Approval of this revision is withheld pending clarification of noted project limits discrepancy.

10. CSJs 0912-72-072: This project is proposed to be funded with an “earmark” contained in SAFETEA-LU. The project description provided in the SAFETEA-LU “earmark” indicates that the funding is intended for the construction of projects that relieve congestion in and around the Texas Medical Center complex. The description of work provided for the project reflects the reconstruction of the existing roadway with turn lanes, 10 foot shared pathway, sidewalks and storm drainage with green infrastructure. Please provide additional information regarding the proposed project’s consistency with the “earmark” language (i.e., projects that relieve congestion). Approval of this revision is withheld pending clarification of the project’s consistency with the “earmark” language.
11. CSJ 0912-72-195: The description of work provided for this project includes installation of railroad crossing equipment. Installation of railroad crossing equipment does not appear to be eligible for CMAQ funding. Approval of this revision is withheld pending clarification of the project’s proposed scope of work and CMAQ eligibility determination concerning the installation of railroad crossing equipment.
12. MPO ID 14581: The description of work provided for this project indicates widening of the Garth Road and Baker area. This revision is approved contingent upon clarification of the project’s scope of work (e.g., widening of roadway from some number of lanes to another number of lanes).
13. CSJs 0912-71-627 and 0912-72-132: The description of work provided for these projects does not provide sufficient information to determine eligibility for CMAQ funding. Approval of these projects is withheld pending clarification of the projects scope of work and eligibility for CMAQ funding.
14. CSJ 0912-71-799: The Total Project Cost noted for this project on the STIP page is substantially greater than that noted in the 2035 RTP Update (\$4.9 million versus \$2.7 million). This revision is approved contingent upon clarification of the noted Total Project cost discrepancy.
15. CSJ 0912-71-688: The Total Project Cost noted for this project on the STIP page is substantially greater than that noted in the 2035 RTP Update (\$28.8 million versus \$15.4 million). This revision is approved contingent upon clarification of the noted Total Project Cost discrepancy.
16. CSJ 0110-04-182: Is the intent of this project to replace existing HOV lane pavement markings or to create new HOV lanes through the placement of pavement markings? Approval of this revision is withheld pending clarification of the scope work.

17. CSJ 0912-37-199: The Total Project Cost noted for this project on the STIP page is substantially greater than that noted in the 2035 RTP Update (\$9.9 million versus \$6.3 million). This revision is approved contingent upon clarification of the noted Total Project Cost discrepancy.
18. CSJ 0912-72-046: This project is proposed to be funded with an “earmark” contained in SAFETEA-LU. The project description provided in the SAFETEA-LU “earmark” indicates that the funding is intended for the construction of projects that relieve congestion in and around the Texas Medical Center complex. The description of work provided for the project appears to reflect the reconstruction of a 2-lane (each direction) divided roadway with curbs and gutters. Please provide additional information regarding the proposed project’s consistency with the “earmark” language (i.e., projects that relieve congestion). Approval of this revision is withheld pending clarification of the project’s consistency with the “earmark” language.
19. CSJ 0912-71-631: The STIP amendment page indicates \$320,809 in “Local Contribution” funding. However, the corresponding MPO TIP amendment documentation does not appear to indicate this funding. This project is approved contingent upon clarification of the noted funding discrepancy.

**Pharr District/MPO:**

1. Hidalgo County MPO: Highway Financial Summary (p.13 of 24) - Please explain why the authorized amount is less than the programmed amount. It appears that FY 2012 is over programmed.